**Worship: Making Me Holy**

**Introduction**

Kent Heaton said when he was young he had a drug problem… He was drug to church all the time! Eventually, he went from being drug to realizing the importance of worship to wanting to worship. Worship has been an activity humans have engaged in from the earliest parts of our history (Gen 4). Why do we worship and what is God doing to us when we worship? Worship is something that we know we are supposed to do but we may not be that excited about being involved in it. What is God trying to do in the process of worship?

In Ezekiel 20, God give the prophet a message to give the elders of Israel who are in Babylonian exile. It was probably not the message that they wanted to hear given it was a harsh rebuke of Israel past and present. There are many fascinating things about Ezekiel 20 but as God brings the nation out of Egypt, He highlights His commandments.

Ezekiel 20:12: “Moreover, I gave them my Sabbaths, as a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them.”

***Sanctify*** (merriam-webster.com)

1) to set apart to a sacred purpose or to religious use

2) to free from sin

God gave them laws that lead to life (20:11). God gave them worship that would make them holy (20:12). Certainly, there were several reasons for the sabbath day (Ex 20:8-11; Dt 5:12-15); even in Ezekiel 20 we read God wanted the nation to know I am the Lord your God (20:20). ***One of the goals of worship is to make me holy.***

***Worship is a weekly reminder that God is at work in us shaping us into His image. It is a reminder that God is making us holy and pure.***

* Phil 2:13: God is at work in us

**1. Israel’s unholiness**

* Heart went after idols (20:16)
* Eyes were on idols (20:24)
* Profaned God’s Sabbaths (20:13, 16, 21, 24)
* Despised holy things (22:8)

Israel did not become holy because they failed to worship God and went after idols. They did not handle the Sabbath day well and eventually despised the holy things of God. This seems to be a problem for them at several points in their history since Malachi addressed this same problem about 200 years later (Mal 1:11-12). Worship was not a reminder that God was making them holy.

**2. Worship today**

I want to challenge us today with our worship: Am I becoming more holy because of my worship? If we are not then the problem is us, not God.

**To those who lead the service**

a) How much time did you spend focusing on your part of the service?

* Not discussing those who set in at last moment (this is noble)
* When I read God’s word, I see no part of worship that is insignificant. But we sadly treat parts of worship as if they take little to no focus. Did you prepare your mind, heart, and soul to lead in your part of worship?
* Men talked yesterday about some minor repairs that need to be made to building and it was suggested we go through a few days before a workday and make a list of all that needs to be done so we can buy the needed supplies. We want to be prepared… Do we take that same level of preparation before worship?

b) When you prepared to lead us in worship did you reflect on how God was making us holy?

* Did God’s greatness capture your heart and were you excited to lead us in worship?

c) Not good with words

* Rather than worrying if we are good with words do we worry if our hearts are prepared. You can be eloquent but not flow from a pure heart. Paul to Timothy (1 Tim 1:5).
* Moses (Ex 4:10-12)

**To the participants**

However, the focus does not all rest on those who lead. Yes, there is a great responsibility but there is a great responsibility placed on the participant in worship. There is no doubt God addresses those who lead the worship in scripture but more often God addresses those who participate in worship.

a) What captured your heart today?

* Singing:
* Prayer:
* Lord’s Supper talk:
* Perhaps I should ask what captured your heart this WEEK?
* Those who prepare will get a lot out of worship
* Did you prepare for Bible class by reading Romans 13?

b) What caught your eye?

* Heb 12:1-3
* Israel’s eyes and hearts were occupied by other things and they did not become holy

c) When does worship service start for you?

* A friend of mine asked me this question. We know the service times (9:30 AM; 5 PM)
* If we start at 9:30 AM probably not going to get much out since we have not prepared
* For the Jews the day began in the evening

d) Was Prayer involved in your preparation?

* The times I get the most out of worship are when I prepare for worship with prayer

Sometimes People will say: You need to emphasis this is not a problem here. We always want to be absolved from responsibility. The truth is that even if we do something well then we need to continue to grow in it.

* If God is making me holy, how has worship changed my perspective about how I handle a situation?
* What do I need to do to prepare to worship my King?
* I want to lead and worship in a way that honors Him and affect my daily life.

***I have come here today for one purpose***: To worship the Lord who created me, redeemed me, and is molding me. I pray I have honored Him.